(b) if so, the action taken to prevent illegal sale of children or illegal adoption through some private orphanages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) While no inter country adoption racket has been reported as such, action has been taken by the Government against agencies found to be indulging in irregularities both in Andhra Pradesh and other States. The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment which deals with adoption matters has advised all State Governments and its recognized agencies to strictly adhere to the guidelines issued by it on inter country adoptions and other adoption matters from time to time.These include mandatory licensing of all orphanages and agencies and monitoring of adoption activities in order to ensure that all adoptions are legally done. The State Governments ensure that such incidents, if any, are prevented by strict enforcement of the relevant laws.

Sexual exploitation of Children

263. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has endorsed Global Commitment (Declaration) adopted in Yokohama for action at national, regional and international level to eradicate commercial, sexual exploitation of childen;

(b) the number of countries which have pledged to adopt this commitment (Declaration);

(c) whether a permanent machinery has been constituted to oversee its implementation; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) 138 countries, including India, sent deligations to the Yokohama conference organised by four NGOs and UNICEF. The conference adopted the Yokohama Global Commitment which included an Explanation Statement by India. In that Statement it was made clear that reference to extra-territorial criminal laws in the said Commitment is intended to ensure that the offender is tried in the country in whose jurisdiction the offence is committed; if he can not be so tried by virtue of his being not present in that country and his being not extradited for facing trial,

he is tried in the country of which he is a national or in the country of which he is a habitual resident or in the country where he is present. Reservations have also been made by U.S., European Union, Iran and the group of Arab and African States.

(c) and (d) Safeguards against trafficking exist in our Constitution, The Indian Penal code and The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956. On the basis of these, the Government of India had formulated a National Plan of Action to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children in 1998, after extensive consultations. The implementation of the Plan of Action is supervised and monitored by a Central Advisory Committee at the Central level. Similarly the States/UTs have set up State Advisory Committees for this purpose. These facts were highlighted at the Yokohama World Congress.

Popularising science education in Karnataka

264. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to arrest the dwindling interest among the young in taking up a career in science in Karnataka;

(b) whether funds have been allocated to Karnataka for popularising science education; and

(c) if so, the details therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) There is no reported decline in the interest of the students in science courses at Senior Secondary stage. However, to encourage students to continue their education in basic sciences at Higher education level, a scheme called "Kishore Vaigyanik Prothsahan Yojna" (KVPY) has been launched during 1999-2000 by Department of Science & Technology which targets the young science students at the school and college level. It aims to encourage the students of basic sciences, engineering and medicine to take up research career in these areas.

To improve the quality of science education and scientific temper, funds are provided to State Governments under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Improvement of Science Education in Schools" which has been operational since 1987-88. Under this scheme the Government of Karnataka has been provided